

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 SP-03 PM-07 INR-11 L-03 IGA-02

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DRAFTED BY EA/TB - LSTERMER:MFG

APPROVED BY EA/TB - JBDEXTER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 154810

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, EAID, BM

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS CONTROL - HELICOPTER ADVISOR

REF: RANGOON 1954

FOR AMBASSADOR OSBORN FROM DEXTER

1. INFORMATION REQUESTED PARAS 4-5 REFTEL BEING PROVIDED
SEPTTEL.

2. WE APPRECIATE YOUR MISGIVINGS REGARDING OUR EARLIER
SUGGESTION THAT HALL BE SENT AS ADVISOR TO ASSIST IN PREPA-
RATION OF PIO/C AND PROVIDE OTHER ADVICE RELATING TO,
HELICOPTER PROGRAM. WE ACCEPT YOUR POSITION THAT THE
TECHNICAL ADVISOR WOULD BE USED PRIMARILY TO ASSIST AIRA
AND EMBASSY; HOWEVER, WE CAN IMAGINE THAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO
HAVE HIM SIT IN ON AT LEAST SOME MEETINGS WITH THE BURMESE
TO FACILITATE EXCHANGES ON TECHNICAL MATTERS. WE WOULD NOT
WANT TO RISK MISUNDERSTANDING BY BRINGING IN SOMEONE AS
CONSULTANT WHOM THEY MIGHT REGARD WITH SUSPICION. BY WAY
OF BACKGROUND, HOWEVER, HALL CLAIMS TO HAVE GOTTEN ON WELL
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WITH THE BURMESE AND TO HAVE BEEN TOLD BY MIS COLONEL

TIN OO DIRECTLY, AS WELL AS BY LETTER, THAT HE WOULD BE WELCOME TO RETURN AT ANY TIME. (MCAVOY AND SUMMERS CORROBORATE THAT HALL'S CAPTORS WERE IMPRESSED WITH HIM).

3. HALL IN OUR OPINION REMAINS THE BEST QUALIFIED AND, ABOVE ALL, THE MOST READILY AVAILABLE CANDIDATE THAT WE KNOW OF FOR THE JOB. WE WOULD THEREFORE HOPE THAT YOU COULD FIND A WAY TO SOUND THE BURMESE OUT ON HIM BEFORE WE SET THE OFFICIAL WHEELS IN MOTION HERE TO FIND AN ALTERNATE. WOULD IT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO LEVEL WITH THEM ON OUR PROBLEM, TELLING THEM FRANKLY THAT HALL IS BEING CONSIDERED FOR THIS TDY ASSIGNMENT BUT IF HIS INVOLVEMENT WOULD BOTHER THEM WE ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER OTHERS? WHILE NO EXHAUSTIVE INQUIRIES HAVE BEEN MADE, WE HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT ANOTHER WELL QUALIFIED PERSON IS A MAN NOW SERVING AS CIVILIAN MAINTENANCE CHIEF FOR THE HELICOPTER FLEET ATTACHED TO THE ICCS IN SAIGON. HE IS ON CONTRACT WITH AIR AMERICA AND PRESUMABLY WOULD HAVE THE DISADVANTAGE, IN BURMESE EYES, OF THAT ASSOCIATION. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER HE WOULD BE AVAILABLE EVEN FOR SUCH A SHORT ASSIGNMENT. ANOTHER QUALIFIED MAN WORKS FOR DEA IN EL PASO BUT HAS HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN THAILAND WITH AID. STILL ANOTHER POTENTIAL CANDIDATE IS WHITE, THE HELICOPTER EXPERT CURRENTLY WORKING FOR DEA IN THAILAND AND FORMERLY WITH AID AS A JUNIOR AIR ADVISOR TO THE THAI NATIONAL POLICE AIR DIVISION. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER EITHER OF THESE DEA TECHNICAL ADVISORS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR TDY IN BURMA.

4. WE ARE NOT TRYING TO PUSH HALL ON YOU, BUT WE DO FEEL THAT HE IS PARTICULARLY COMPETENT, EXPERIENCED AND WELL-QUALIFIED FOR THIS KIND OF WORK. MOREOVER, HE IS FAMILIAR WITH THE BURMA PROGRAM AND HAS BEEN OUR PRIMARY ADVISOR AND SOURCE OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION THAT WE HAVE PROVIDED THE EMBASSY DURING LAST MONTH OR SO. HE WAS AWARE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT TECHNICAL MANUALS NEEDED WERE IN BANGKOK AND ASKED DAO THERE TO FORWARD THEM TO YOU. HE IS ENTHUSIASTIC AND HAS EVEN SUGGESTED THAT, IF UNACCEPTABLE IN BURMA, HE COULD GO TO BANGKOK AND ASSIST FROM THAT LOCATION IN PROVIDING AIRA WITH THE SPECIFICATIONS AND ADDITIONAL

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION REQUIRED TO EXPEDITE PREPARATION OF THE CONTRACT NECESSARY TO ORDER THE HELICOPTERS.

5. FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF SERVING YOUR INTERESTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, WE AWAIT YOUR FURTHER THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THIS ISSUE. KISSINGER

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